

**Animation of Public Space through the Arts: Innovation and Sustainability
International Symposium (and Workshops)**

27 SEPTEMBER 2011

9:30 – 14:00

Special Session:

PUBLIC GARDENS, GARDENING, AGRICULTURE: TOWARDS MORE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Centro de Estudos Sociais (CES), University of Coimbra – Sala 1

Urban gardening is a growing mode of social engagement into creative/productive use of the public space worldwide. Urban gardens have a very long history, as growing food in or around the city was common practice before industrialization and urban sprawls of the last two centuries. Even in recent times, however, people have kept practicing urban farming in a variety of forms, as a means to subsistence, to social and generational cohesion, to local/sustainable food production. At the same time, Urban Agriculture has become a growing field of interdisciplinary studies between the social and the natural sciences. This workshop aims to suggest the possibility of seeing urban gardening from one additional perspective, that is: as a form of 'popular art/craft'. Urban farming is a non-industrial activity based on personal, often vernacular, crafting skills. It is a creative way of using nature as raw material and as a source of inspiration. Designing horticulture, bee-hives and little scale irrigation, remodelling abandoned urban plots, turning waste into cultivated green areas, are all forms of creative engagement with/reinvention of the public space. Moreover, people often engage with these activities in un-planned ways, as forms of individual and collective re-connection with nature, thus also re-inventing social connection at the community level.

Starting from a reflection on the above general aspects of urban gardening as 'popular art/craft', the workshop will put into dialogue several experiences from different parts of the world, aiming at stimulating a debate on the multiple ways in which those experiences can foster socially and ecologically sustainable communities.

The round table will be followed by a guided tour to the community permaculture experiments at the University of Coimbra's Botanical Garden.

*Coordination: **Stefania Barca and Lúcia de Oliveira Fernandes** (CES/Ecology and Society Workshop)*

30 participants maximum

Registration fee: 15€

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9:30 – 11:30	<p>Roundtable: Presentations and sharing of perspectives, practices, and research interests, including:</p> <p>Robin Reid and Bonnie Klohn, Thompson Rivers University, Canada – The role of community gardens as a form of sustainability in small cities</p> <p>Annelieke van der Sluijs, University of Coimbra Botanical Garden, Portugal – Food production as a starting point for redesigning urban life styles: Do-it-together experiments with beautiful and inviting foodscapes in Coimbra's Botanical garden</p> <p>Tania Leimbach, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Australia – Concrete Jungle: A green wall for growing ideas</p> <p>Elisabete Alves, Environmental Education, Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal – WANTED for an unlimited coalition between species – call for the adoption of a bee swarm. A work proposal by the collective of artists Bureaux D'Etudes, in the context of the exhibition « To the Arts, Citizens! » (Serralves Museum, November 2010 - March 2011)</p> <p>Jorge Moreira, Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento (ACTUAR) – From concept to practice: Coimbra's Urban Social Gardens experience</p> <p>Stefania Barca, CES Ecology and Society Workshop (Discussant)</p> <p>Giovanni Allegretti, CES (Chair)</p>
11:30 – 12:00	Break – coffee and walk to Botanical Garden
12:00 – 14:00	Site tour of University of Coimbra Botanical Garden, with focus on public involvement initiatives
14:00 –	Lunch (at participants' own cost)